(c) and (d): The quantitative restrictions on imports of various items have been removed from time to time as part of economic reforms,'to meet domestic shortages and also in accordance with our international commitments. Removal of QRs over the years has not had any significant impact on the average rate of growth of imports so far. In fact, non-oil imports during April—March, 2001 have shown a negative growth of 3.5 as compared to last year. Efforts have also been made to provide a level playing field to domestic producers by calibrating the duty structure, which has been revised as and when considered necessary. In addition, all imports are subject to domestic laws, rules, regulations, procedure and technical standards applicable to the domestic products.

Most of our imports comprise raw materials, essential items, capital goods and petroleum crude. It is neither possible nor economically feasible to produce all our requirements within the country.

Export of Agricultural Produce by APEDA

3834. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN : Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the Karnataka unit of APEDA is buying gherkins for exports;

(b) if so, the details of other agricultural produce APEDA plans to export; and

(c) whether APEDA propose to enter into purchase of mangoes from Karnataka in view of the high production of mangoes ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI DIG VU AY SINGH): (a) No, Sir. The Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) is not directly involved in trading and exporting agro products but only assists the exporters through its various schemes and promotional activities.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Foreign Visits of the Minister

3835. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN : Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the countries visited by the Minister during the last two years; and

(b) the details of proposals/achievements of those visits, country-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) and (b) A Statement indicating the

countries visited by the Minister in respect of work relating to the Department of Commerce during the last two years, *viz.* 1999-2000 and 2000-2001, is given below:

s. No	Name of the Minister	Period of the visit	Countries visited	Purpose of the visit	Achievements
1	2	3	4	5	6
1.	Shri Ramakrishna Hegde, Commerce Minister	9th Aug., 1999	Male	To attend the SAARC Commerce meeting	Consultations held on various WTO issues in the context of 3rd WTO Ministerial Conference leading to Male, Joint Declaration dated 9-8-1999.
2.	Shri Murasoli Maran, Minister of and Industry	24th to 26th Oct., 1999.	Switzerland	To attend the informal Ministerial Meeting	Consultations were held on the proposed New Round in the context of 3rd WTO Ministerial Conference.
3.	Shri Murasoli Maran, Minister of Commerce and Industry	4th to 6th Nov., 1999.	USA	To attend the workshop on developing countries	Discussions were held on new multilateral round of trade negotiations in the context of 3rd WTO Ministerial Conference.
4.	Shri Murasoli Maran, Minister of Commerce and Industry	30th Nov., to 3rd Dec, 1999	USA	To attend the 3rd Ministerial Conference of WTO at Seattle (USA).	The Seattle Conference remained inconclusive
5.	Shri Murasoli Maran, Minister of Commerce and Industry	17th to 23rd Feb., 2000.	China, Hongkong	To attend the meeting of the Sixth Sessions of Indo-China Joint Economic Group and in connection with	The discussions were held for development of bilateral trade between the two countries. An exhibition titled

1	2	3	4	5	6
				bilateral agreement with China	"India into new Millennium" was also inaugurated in Hong Kong. A bilateral agreement in connection with the accession of China to WTO was signed on 22-03-2000.
6.	Shri Murasoli ma ran. Minister of Commerce and Industry.	18th to 26th May, 2000.	UK, France	To participate the Investment Promotion Meet/ Conference of Commercial Representatives in London, 10th Session of the Indo-French Joint Committee in Paris and Investment Promotion Meets in Paris and Lyons (France).	The bilateral trade relations with these countries strengthened as a result of these visits.
7.	Shri Murasoli Maran, Minister of and Industry.	14th June, 2000.	UAE	To participate in the conference of the Commercial Representatives in Indian missions in the Gulf region.	The outcome of the visit is the improvement in functioning of the Commercial Representatives.
8.	-do-	15th to 20 June, 2000.	Egypt.	To participate in the 10th G-15 Summit and Trade and Economic Ministers meeting.	The Indian concerns relating to trade were effectively addressed and reflected in the Joint Communique.
9.	-do-	12th to 16th Feb., 2001.	Thailand	To participate in the UNCTAD X conference.	India's concerns - on trade and development aspects were put

1	2	3	4	5	6
					forward effectively and are reflected in the Bangkok Declaration and UNCTAD-X Plan of Action.

FDI in Retail Trading by Spencers

3836. SHRI AMAR SINGH : Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received any representation from the Federation of Association of Maharashtra, Mumbai regarding foreign direct investment in retail trading by the Spencers and Co., Chennai alongwith Dairy Farm International, Mauritius;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken by government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (DR. RAMAN): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. Government have received a number of representations from the Federation of Association of Maharashtra that retail trading is being undertaken by M/s. Spencer and Company, Chennai along with M/s. Dairy Farm International (FDI), Mauritius Ltd. in violation of the FC approval, which only permits them cash and cany wholesale operation.

Prior to 1997, approval had been given to M/s. Spencer and Company in 1995 and 1996 to set up food supermarkets and healthcare retail outlets, respectively, in accordance with FDI policy prevalent then. However, subsequently, another approval was granted in favour of the company in March, 2001 in accordance with the extant policy for FDI in trading activities, which permits them to set up a joint venture with M/s. DFI Mauritius Ltd. to undertake cash and carry wholesale operations only. Any violation of the terms and conditions of foreign collaboration approval will attract appropriate action by the Administrative Ministry concerned.